

Claims

- [c1] 1. An automotive interior trim component, comprising:
a substrate member forming at least part of a structural support for the trim component, said substrate member having a first side and a second side, and having at least one target area for providing a soft feel to the trim component, said substrate member having a first thickness outside said target area to provide rigidity to said substrate member, and a second thickness within said target area that is reduced relative to said first thickness such that said substrate is pliable in said target area.
- [c2] 2. The trim component of claim 1, wherein said first side of said substrate member is formed with a surface texture simulating a cover material for the trim component.
- [c3] 3. The trim component of claim 1, further comprising reinforcing ribs formed on the second side of said substrate member, proximate said target area.
- [c4] 4. The trim component of claim 1, further comprising a flexible cover layer disposed on said first side of said substrate member, at least proximate said target area.

- [c5] 5. The trim component of claim 4, further comprising a backing member disposed on said second side of said substrate member proximate said target area, said backing member cooperating with said cover layer and said target area of said substrate member to provide a soft feel to the trim component in said target area.
- [c6] 6. The trim component of claim 5, wherein said backing member comprises foam material.
- [c7] 7. The trim component of claim 5, wherein said backing member comprises a cartridge having a first side confronting said target area, said first side of said cartridge including spaced, raised projections such that said cover layer can deflect between said projections upon application of force to said cover layer.
- [c8] 8. The trim component of claim 5 further comprising a backing member support coupled to said second side of said substrate member and securing said backing member to said second side of said substrate member.
- [c9] 9. The trim component of claim 4, wherein said flexible cover layer is molded over said substrate member.
- [c10] 10. The trim component of claim 1, wherein said substrate member comprises an injection moldable polymer.

- [c11] 11. An armrest, comprising:
- a substrate member forming at least part of a structural support for the armrest, said substrate member having a first side and a second side, and having at least one target area for providing a soft feel to the armrest, said substrate member having a first thickness outside said target area to provide rigidity to said substrate member, and a second thickness within said target area that is reduced relative to said first thickness such that said substrate is pliable in said target area;
 - a flexible cover layer disposed on said first side of said substrate member, at least proximate said target area;
 - a foam backing member disposed on said second side of said substrate member proximate said target area, said backing member cooperating with said cover layer and said target area of said substrate member to provide a soft feel to the armrest in said target area; and
 - a backing member support coupled to said second side of said substrate member and securing said backing member to said second side of said substrate member.

- [c12] 12. A method of forming an automotive interior trim component, comprising:
- molding a substrate member from a first polymeric material, the substrate member having first thickness providing rigidity to the substrate member and a second thickness in a target area for providing a soft feel to the trim component, the second thickness less than the first thickness such that the target area is pliable and provides the soft feel; and
- injecting a second material to form a pliable cover layer over the substrate member.
- [c13] 13. The method of claim 12, further comprising:
- securing a backing member to the substrate member proximate the target area and on a side of the substrate member opposite the pliable cover layer.
- [c14] 14. The method of claim 13, further comprising:
- securing the backing member to the substrate member with a backing member support.